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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Wrangell Island Project

We are writing to comment on the the Wrangell Island Project draft environmental impact statement (DEIS).

The Forest Service's Preferred Alternative - Alternative 2 - proposes logging 65 million board feet of old-growth from 5,309 acres and bulldozing 32 miles of new road. The new roads will cost nearly \$5.5 million dollars. High road development costs means more old growth habitat must be clearcut to pay for the new roads.

This is a shocking waste of public money and a shocking destruction of public land and trees.

However, according to the Forest Service's own data, all the action alternatives are economically infeasible. That means that under every scenario considered the American public would be paying companies to log the ancient trees on Wrangell Island.

Meanwhile, without explanation, the Forest Service has failed to consider at the "Small Mill and Wildlife Alternative" submitted by the Wrangell Resource Council and SEACC in 2011. The citizen's alternative proposal wouldn't require new roads and would meter out up to 2 MMBF per year of timber to supply local mills:

- \*Ensuring a consistent, long-term supply of economic timber to small mills in Wrangell from small sales along the existing road system over a 30-year period

- \*Maintaining Wrangell Island's deer population

- \*Integrating wildlife and fish habitat restoration, recreation, and stewardship activities into the project based on the "Good for Services" model

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This "Small Mill and Wildlife Alternative" protects fish and wildlife and respects the local residents.

The Thoms Creek (VCU 4790) is the most productive salmon stream on Wrangell Island; it supports an important sockeye fishery.

All the action alternatives under current consideration call for logging productive old-growth in Thoms Creek VCU even though this area would be off-limits to logging under the proposed Amendment to the Tongass Land Management Plan, which is under review now and slated for implementation later this year.

All the alternative plans, except the non considered "Small Mill and Wildlife Alternative", for the Wrangell Island Timber Sale are unsustainable and not economical for Wrangell residents or the habitat and the wildlife and trees.

Please do not consider any of the current alternatives. They are not good.

Please bring your attention to "Small Mill and Wildlife Alternative" submitted by the Wrangell Resource Council and SEACC in 2011 and do a responsible job managing Wrangell Island.

Thank you for your careful attention to our comments.

Sincerely, The Stewart Family, 1045 Highway 89 S, Gardiner, MT 59030